

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0023  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA  
USMISSION NATO  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 3425

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, GR, UR  
SUBJECT: GREEK-SOVIET TALKS

REF/ A. ATHENS 11797 B. NICOSIA 988

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. IN WHAT WAS OFFICIALLY DESCRIBED AS A CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION LAST OCTOBER BETWEEN GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS AND SOVIET AMBASSADOR UDALTSOV (REFTEL), A RANKING RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT VISITED ATHENS FOR TALKS WITH GREEK MFA OFFICIALS APRIL 13-14. THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, GRUPIAKOV, VARIOUSLY DESCRIBED AS THE SOVIET MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OR THE DIRECTOR OF THE FIFTH POLITICAL DIVISION (WHICH APPARENTLY COVERS GREEK, TURKISH AND CYPRIOT AFFAIRS), WAS ACCCOMPANIED DURING THE SESSIONS BY AMBASSADOR UDALTSOV AND OTHER OFFICERS OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY HERE. JOHN TZOUNIS, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS AT THE GREEK MFA, HEADED THE

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GREEK SIDE. THE GREEK AMBASSADOR TO MOSCOW ALSO PARTICIPTED IN THE TALKS.

2. WHILE THERE WAS NO FINAL COMMUNIQUE, "WELL-INFORMED SOURCES" WERE REPORTED BY THE SEMI-OFFICIAL ATHENS NEWS AGENCY TO HAVE STATED UPON THEIR CONCLUSION THAT THE TALKS HAD ESTABLISHED THAT, ALTHOUGH GREEK-SOVIET RELATIONS WERE DEVELOPING

NORMALLY, THERE WAS ROOM FOR AN EFFORT TO EXPAND THEM FURTHER. APPARENTLY GRUPIAKOV DID NOT MEET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS, BUT HE DID MAKE A COURTESY CALL ON DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER STAVROPOULOS. BITSIOS, COMMENTING ON PRESS REPORTS, WAS REPORTED TO HAVE DENIED THAT HE HAD BEEN INVITED TO VISIT THE SOVIET UNION OR THAT THE QUESTION OF A VISIT HAD ARisen. THE GOG HAS SO FAR BEEN CIRCUMSPECT IN COMMENTING PUBLICLY ON WHAT OCCURRED DURING THE TALKS. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION APPEARING IN THE PRESS, THE FIRST DAY WAS SAID TO HAVE FOCCESSED ON AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS "ON INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND ALSO ON THE CYPRUS CRISIS." THE SECOND DAY REPORTEDLY WAS DEVOTED TO "BILATERAL RELATIONS" INCLUDING DISCUSSION OF CONSULAR, EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL MATTERS. REFERENCE WAS ALSO MADE TO THE COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT UNDER NEGOTIATION FOR SOME TIME NOW WHICH, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, WIL BE SIGNED HERE NEXT WEEK WITH A SOVIET DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMERCE.

3. THE PRESS SPECULATED WIDELY ABOUT WHAT WAS DISCUSSED. RIGHT-WING ELEFTHEROS COSMOS HEADLINED THAT GRUPIAKOV HAD BEEN SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO ANKARA AND CLAIMED THE TALKS TOOK PLACE IN A COOL ATMOSPHERE. ON THE OTHER HAND, MOSCOW-ORIENTED RIZOSPASTIS (KKE-EXTERIOR) WELCOMED THE CONTACTS AS A POSITIVE STEP TOWARD IMPROVED GREEK-USSR RELATIONS WHICH WULD LEAD TO SOVIET SUPPORT ON THE CYPRUS ISSUE. SOME NEWSPAPERS WROTE THAT THE SOVIETS HAD WARNED THE GOG AGAINST EXTENDING GREECE'S TERRITORIAL WATERS TO 12 MILES BECAUSE OF THE NEGATIVE EFFECT THIS WOULD HAVE ON THE MOVEMENT OF SOVIET SHIPS IN THE AEGEAN. OTHER JOURNALS COMPLAINED THAT THE USSR HAD NOT

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CONDEMNED TURKEY FOR THE 1974 INVASION OF CYPRUS.

4. GRUPIAKOV SPENDS TODAY (APRIL 15) VISITING TOURIST SPOTS BEFORE MOVING ON TO NICOSIA FOR TALKS WITH THE GOC (NICOSIA 988).  
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5. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE AMBASSADOR'S PRIVATE MEETING THIS AFTERNOON WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS WHERE THEY DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF OTHER SUBJECTS (REPORTED SEPTEL, NOTAL), THE AMBASSADOR INQUIRED WHETHER BITSIOS WISHED TO SAY ANYTHING TO HIM ABOUT THE JUST-CONCLUDED GREEK SOVIET TALKS. BITSIOS HAD NOT RAISED THE MATTER HIMSELF. BITSIOS SAID NO, THAT THERE REALLY WASNT MUCH TO SAY AND SAID THEY HE HAD NOT BEEN INVOLVED MUCH WITH THEM HIMSELF AND THOUGHT IT PREFERABLE FOR THE AMBASSADOR OR ANOTHER EMBASSY OFFICIAL TO MEET WITH TZOUNIS AND BE DEBRIEFED DIRECTLY BY TZOUNIS. THE AMBASSADOR INQUIRED WHETHER THE GREEK GOVERNMENT PLANNED ALSO TO BRIEF OTHER NATO ALLIES IN BRUSSELS OR ELSEWHERE

CONCERNING THESE BILATERAL GREEK-SOVIET TALKS. BITSIOS SEEMED SOMEWHAT TAKEN ABACK BY THE INQUIRY AND APPARENTLY DECIDED ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT THAT HE HAD BETTER SAY SOMETHING FURTHER ON THE SUBJECT. HE SAID THAT THE CONSULTATIONS HAD NOT GONE BEYOND A "ROUTINE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS" BETWEEN THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAD ENVISAGED THESE TALKS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF EAST-WEST DETENTE, THE HELSINKI CSCE FINAL ACT, AND THE FORTH-COMING BELGRADE CONFERENCE. THE TALKS WERE ALSO PART OF A BROADER EFFORT BY THE GOG TO REINVIGORATE ITS DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND IT WAS IN THIS SENSE THAT HE AND OTHER GREEK OFFICIALS HAD RECEIVED OFFICIALS FROM OTHER BALKAN AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES; SUCH ROUTINE DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS WITH THE SOVIET UNION COULD THEREFORE NOT BE LEFT ASIDE. HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE WOULD GIVE INSTRUCTIONS TO TZOUNIS TO GIVE EMBASSY OFFICIALS A FULL DEBRIEFING ON THIS SUBJECT. BITSIOS ADDED THAT THE SPECULATION ABOUT HIM POSSIBLY VISITING

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MOSCOW AT SOME POINT LATER THIS YEAR WAS TOTALLY UNFOUNDED. HE SAID HE HAD NO PLANS WHATSOEVER FOR SUCH A VISIT AND WAS NOT EVEN CONSIDERING IT AT THIS TIME.

KUBISCH

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## Message Attributes

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